

Phoenix Forum

May 14th

Part I (Federal & State Agency Comments)

Most Critical Issues

Budget – a level playing field for all 5 management agencies. BIA receives only 6% of the total preparedness budget, federal wide

Human Capital – managers are old and ready to retire – who will replace our upper level fire managers?

Issue of land management programs w/fire management – fire mgt is only a tool for land managers to use.

Policy alignment & governance. Move away from fuels reduction to restoration of landscapes and ecosystems- riparian, desert, forested. Etc.

Accountability

Deliverables over time that are reasonable- that deal with the issue and not just politically driven

Need to get better at cost share/cost apportionment through dialogue and standard formulas

Address, understand and respect differences in agency missions. USFS is not financially responsible for protection of private property, per agency direction. Yet we support and do it.

Easily “directed” from above, but difficult to negotiate at local levels. Strains relationships, compromises ground level cooperation and trust by financial constraints.

Continued urbanization into wild lands with an increased expectation on the part of the residents for a higher-level of emergency response, which is directly related to both the risks that firefighters take and the increasing costs of fires.

Increasing amounts of non-native invasive species that are changing large components of non-fire adapted ecosystems into grasslands (i.e. buffleggrass, fountain grass, cheat grass etc)

State and local govts are dealing with decreased staffs due to budget cuts with the outcome being that fire costs are indirectly shifted to federal agencies

Agencies stiff have difficulty assisting each other on non-emergency projects, such as Rx fire and mechanical fuels treatments, due to contracting issues and inability to charge to a single account – as with the P-codes for wildfires.

Funding decisions and management direction from above, for tribal lands, must respect tribal sovereignty. Tribal perspective must be understood. The Regional Office does not necessarily understand local tribal perspective.

Resource management funding levels for BIA/Tribes must be brought into line with other federal agencies. Example- our tribe is funded and staffed at a rate that is less than half of its nearest and most similar national Forest. The inequity is exacerbated by FS to realize budget savings by charging base-8 work hours to the suppression account, which DOI agencies can't do. Fire management goals and objectives cannot be met without funding for the requisite vegetation management (social equity/social sensitivity). When across the board cuts are made to the fire

management budget, the relative impact on BIA/Tribal programs is much greater than the relative impact on the large well-funded agencies

Involving Tribes in Wildfire Planning & response on tribal and non-tribal federal lands

Facilitate Indian self-determination

Encourage federal agencies to understand and exercise tribal trust authority

Consider all facets of wild land fire including prevention, vegetation management, preparedness, suppression, BAER, and long term restoration.

Aligning fire management strategies of all agencies to protect and enhance fire adapted and non-fire adapted ecosystems across agency boundaries

Risk to the increasing WUI both private and commercial

Fiscal stress and budget realities as it relates to all agencies

Escalating emergency response demands that have added complexity for all fire management agencies (increasing wildfire activity, hurricane responses, oil spills, etc)

Common business practices as it relates to funding fire suppression operations and fuels mgt (USFS charges base salary to suppression and Interior agencies do not)

Common practices for information sharing and technologies that can be used by all agencies

Examples include WFDSS used by federal agencies but not state forestry, NFPORS used by Interior agencies but not the USFS, different GIS standards for agencies.

Climate change and its effects on fire management

Recruitment and retention of next generation of firefighters (succession planning)

Different policies for each agency and how to merge those to become more consistent (standards)

Priority Values & Attributes

Who is the public? How will our decisions affect the public?

BIA works directly with tribal governments in a govt to govt relationship [

Goals & objectives of a tribe (our public) are different than the general public and even from tribe to tribe.

When placing values on resources, the voices of the tribes must be heard.

Who has a perspective on these values & what are those perspectives

Identify the spectrum of values to be considered.

State wise assessment

Appropriate mix of people in developing strategy

Fuels funding – what about restoration drive and funding

Zoning – community planning & development

One agency's priority maybe a priority in another agency's mission what are difference in agency missions?

How to attribute a cost to non-monetized resource or values- such as wilderness, threatened and endangered species or habitat. How can Rx for habitat restoration or protection have priority for implementation, compared to those in WUI for structure protection? Will fires in the contiguous wild lands inherently be lower priority as opposed to those in WUI.

Are priority values at risk identified in interagency plans such CWPP, FMPs, Land Use plans?
Are there existing documents that address fire management issues and strategies such as 2009 QFR?

Are new national priorities and emphasis areas (renewable energy, etc) addressing fire management issues (risks, fuels)?

With declining budgets with all agencies how will agencies prioritize work as it relates to hazardous fuels and ecological function?

Are agencies using the same definitions as it relates to fire management such as what is definition of WUI (every agency has its own definition)

Is our current wild land fire organization sustainable for years to come or are there major overhauls needed in order to meet the ever growing needs of the public?

Are communities going to take more responsibility as it relates to wildfire as opposed to dependence on government being there during a wild land fire event (rewarding our communities to take responsibility)

Do all agencies have similar priorities as it relates to land management and what are they?

Lack of an effective mechanism to prioritize, integrate and act across large scales across all fire-related needs (nested assessments based on scale?)

Shotgun allocation of funding by function & jurisdiction?

Cost of complex network for roles & infrastructure?

Concentrate on larger national outcome goals and mechanisms to address integration and cost issues (how to step down)

Fire adapted communities

Coordination with state and local fire suppression – fire prevention – mitigation

Forest Management –Policy Realignments

Look at desert ecosystems (other non forest ecosystems)

Smoke (EPA) and other external factors affecting land management

Some measure of social equity must be used in weighing priorities, attributes, and other concerns, politically weak entities are ignored.

Since Tribes are sovereign nations, tribal priorities should not be weighted and ranked as subordinate to BIA priorities. BIA authority does not function in the same top down model as other federal agencies. Tribes determine their own goals, objectives, and priorities, and BIA is supposed to support them.

Rating and Incorporating Risk

How much is acceptable risk? Is it measurable -- how does risk benefit/hurt tribal governments

This is beyond a quick response It's very complicated – one though is how you take a complicated process and communicate it simply so people can understand.

Should stay broad in nature & let regions/states define specific risks i.e. desert communities unique to Southwest.

Focus on risk management strategies – analyze and identify hazards. Consider the probability and consequences of undesirable outcomes weighed against probability of strategic success- risk a little to save a little- risk a lot to save a lot.

That depends on the intent –this Cs as opposed to earlier one. Is this one directed more towards the Flame Act and cost-containment of large fires – or is it intended to replace the earlier NFP CS?

What mechanisms exist and are in place to identify risk within each geographic area (risk assessments, communities at risk list?)

Are there common business practices nationally that help managers identify risks

Are there areas or communities that have received funding for treatments and equipment since the inception of the National Fire Plan, that continue to receive funding even though the risk has alleviated due to treatments etc, and are there proper checks and balances for this (or is just historical?)

How will agencies consider common/rankings weights for priorities (BLM AZ desert ecosystems vs. USFS Ponderosa Pine)

Are current risk assessment tools adequate or is there a need to look at new technologies or tools to adequately assess risks

Outcome data (occurrence, impact, etc)

Large scale assessments at larger scales

Value driven at smaller scales – but integrated across jurisdictions

Cost-benefit

Regional priorities (state assessment plans, etc)

The relative level of negative impact on community needs to be considered between reservations, which have limited land base, and public lands, which are extensive.

Weighting and ranking is increasingly favoring WUI. Affluent areas with lots of political influence (CA) are gaining the highest priority. Affluence and political clout seem to have most influence on prioritization. Remote areas (especially reservations) are effectively sacrifice areas as funds are increasingly concentrated on WUI. This pattern is parallel to the SW range management philosophy that assumed riparian areas could sacrifice to cattle impacts because

they are a miniscule portion of the landscape, without realization of the fact that riparian areas are the most ecologically important parts of the SW landscape. Inadequate management of non-WUI areas can result in large scale wildfires that impact human populations far from the forest (water quality and quantity, air quality, climate, recreation opportunities)

To paraphrase Stephen Pyne- 80% of the houses that have been destroyed by wildfires were in California. It's a regional problem, not a national problem.

Tribal culture needs to have some weight in the ranking process. Tribal culture is misunderstood outside of tribal communities. The value of the culture is not included in assessments because it usually doesn't have a monetary value so is difficult to quantify. The land and trees and animals are part of Tribal culture. The people are part of their land, so loss of aspects of the of the natural world result in community suffering. Culture cannot be defined separate from the land and "resources". It is not only archaeological sites and sacred areas. Tribal culture is not something that can be extracted from the land and quantified; it is an intrinsic quality of the natural world.

The cohesive strategy should not adapt a one-size-fits-all policy that rewards the most politically powerful areas of the country. Areas in which poor building practices and poor community design result in high-risk, high value WUI should not be rewarded by gaining a majority of wild land fire suppression and vegetation management budgets. The residents of these communities should pay their own costs for protection from wild land fire

Time Frame

1st you need a vision so you know where the strategy is taking you

I'd advocate for a 4-7-10 year time frame to address short-medium-long term aspects or at least a 5-10 year approach that adjusts with every 5 year review.

5 years – this will allow for flexibility Is the strategy successful?

5 years- in order to ensure that the plan does not become obsolete and is reviewed and modified periodically

5 Years. Tribes are constantly changing and evolving their management capabilities

5 years short term

20 years medium term

50—years – succession terms

Less than 10 years in neither efficient nor effective

Rolling 10 year

At least 20 years but adaptive with 5 year reviews

Land Unit Plans, State Risk Assessments, CWPPs, Land management regulations

What are the plans of the tribes? Goals & Objectives?

How can you move towards achieving common goals with variety of plans that come into play- are there opportunities to move together over time- share common vision & some aspects of strategy

Risk planning- hazard analysis occurs before the fire emergency- isn't FLAME act funding for after the fact/

Isn't this Cohesive strategy effort more in tune with efforts prescribed in the 10 year CS from the 2000 NFP?

Are plans current/

Were all agencies supportive of their geographic plans (CWPPs, assessments, etc)

Is land use plan supported and consistent with partners plan across the fence?

Has plan considered partnering with adjacent agencies to achieve same common work to gain in efficiencies?

Evolve to interagency fire compacts

West-wide risk assessment

Tribal plans –with their culturally driven goals and objectives. Each tribe has its own definition of cultural values.

All things considered – most significant issue

Address the unlevel playing field as it pertains to budget (preparedness, fuels management, WUI, hazard fuels reduction)

The unique tribal nations. Meeting with the ITC is a great start, but keep in mind they represent only tribes that have forests. Tribal consultation needs to happen

Policy alignment across jurisdictions – otherwise it will always be a struggle.

Directing funding to WUI and away from the back 40 is shortsighted. It's like only taking a last stand & ignoring the small battles that could have changed the need for a last stand.

Realistic objectives – given federal budget deficit etc.

Need to bring in state game & fish agencies along with USFWS- our vision or strategy for success may conflict with their missions or goals for viable populations of wildlife.

Is the purpose – operations, strategic objectives for managing public lands, financial guidance?

The single biggest issue is increasing urbanization into the wild lands with increased expectations on the part of residents for a higher level of emergency response = which is directly related to both the risks that firefighters take and the increasing costs of fires. It increases the probability of fire starts and we see the likelihood of firefighters taking greater risks on smaller fires that still very expensive due to amount of resources required to protect communities

We cannot afford to narrow our scope to WUI and emergency stabilization. We need to continue to treat ecosystem “systems” through veg management (fuels, rehabilitation, restoration, Invasive species, etc)

Barriers that exists with agencies in one common budget process (DOI/USFS), different fire standards, different medical standards, pay grades, training etc?

How we prioritize and decide to fund/act at various scales and functions

Most critical issue is tribal consultation or lack thereof
Tribes are often ignored in the planning effort

Sustaining Firefighting capacity

Social equity – or better – sensitivity to Tribal situations. Tribes have limited land base- some cultures are tied to their birthplace, if they leave, they are giving up part of themselves.

Other

Every tribe is different- it may take a different approach to reach out to each tribe and get them to engage. There is no single entity that can speak for all tribes/ ITC may be the closest thing to single entities that understands issues of multiple tribes.

Many tribes often have all their attention focused inwards due to many factors (mistrust of dominant culture, serious social problems, poor governance, limited understanding of how the world works outside the reservation, inadequate funding/staffing to handle more than the most pressing issues. There may be no energy left, or not enough understanding of large issues; for Tribes to be able to contribute to national efforts.

More emphasis on the economic impacts of fire and economies that can help in addressing the issue. Everything from communities that lose recreation based infrastructure & demand for wood products that will allow us to restore forested systems

Part II – Phoenix Forum Local & NGOs/Associations & Academics

Quote of the Session

“Remember- By the time you call the fire department, all other better ideas have failed”

Most Critical Issues

Recognition that the general public may very well have an expectation of zero risk with regard to the federal government and risk management?

Restoration to fire adapted ecosystems (I.e. the ability to accept fire)

Alignment of prior federal policies to attain whatever strategy

Levels of responsibility for all persons/agencies involved in prevention and suppression

Once fire is introduced or reintroduced, is the public aware of what’s going on and how they are involved/ What impact should be expected to accept or adapt to smoke, economics, and inconveniences?

Continued support of local jurisdictions’ efforts in fuels modifications in communities at risk. State fire assistance grants must continue for the local governments to continue to get the work done in their communities

With climate change the fire landscape will change in unpredictable ways

How can we build an adaptive strategy?

Building resiliency across the landscape is key. There will always be fire in the SW because of lightning. The only remaining term, fiscally prudent strategy is to prepare the landscape to receive fire and return it to a beneficial role.

During the past 10 years we have invested 2/3rds of the budget related to fire in preparedness and suppression. Only 1/3 has been dedicated to achieve land management objectives that build resiliency so that the risk of fire is lowered. We need to move towards front end restoration to avoid back end suppression.

Need to add nuance to 2001 effort to identify communities at risk. Do this by identifying “red zones”- no more than 10-20% of nation inclusive of communities and landscape, based on occupancy (housing density) fuel loads, and departure from historical conditions, and fire history & ignitions (e.g. USFS “dirty 30 forests” – *CI initiative- editors note*)

66% of US is adapted to frequent fire (Land fire regime groups I & II) we suppress 98% of wildfire and our 550 million annual expenditure on hazardous fuels is not enough to keep us from falling behind the new fuel accumulation.

Public expectations –building partnerships with private sector to support public sector management education on mitigation, defensible space, WUI fire codes

Landscape level treatments - Land use planning

Suppression costs vs. treatment costs with appropriate coeds and regulations

Ability to track – need a data base that is consistent for all.

Fire is needed to restore forest health

More people are moving into the Forest

Climate change means hotter and drier conditions in the Southwest, so greater fire risk. But restoring role of fire to ecosystem is step towards natural resiliency. Ecological restoration to adapt to climate change and create sustainable communities should be the overall framework

Protection of human life, communities, property and natural and cultural resources

Firefighter safety

Runaway costs

Current presidents budget reducing fire rehabilitation and move most of hazardous fuels money to wild land/urban interface. This is a huge mistake and could be the reason that the sage grouse ultimately gets listed

Failure on the part of the counties and local governments to step up with zoning and fire protection codes enforced in the wild land/urban interface.

Failure on the part of the insurance industry to universally put in place cost incentives for defensible space and related prevention elements in areas of wild land/urban interface.

Working with property owners, lenders, insurers, and local governments to make properties safe

Reducing human ignitions

Minimizing potential of high intensity wildfires that damage critical habitat, watersheds, and other resource values

Assuring the application of the best science, research, and analysis techniques to identify the firefighting, fuels reduction, and management resources needed to maximize performance at any viable budget level

Adequate funding for wild land fire management is available without impacting other programs

Alignment of targets, Planning and application of Fire on the landscaped

Mechanism for assuring landscapes are ready for natural or historical fire regimes (Restoring fire adaptive landscapes)

Application of Fire Policy needs to be synonymous and equal attention on all jurisdictions

Unified policy, authorities, tools, and flexibility on all lands (Parity)

Developing landscape conditions that allow extensive use of wild land fire for resource benefit

Important ecosystem dynamic is that we still try to mitigate/eliminate risk by burning or allowing fire on the landscape / eliminate risk by burning or allowing fire on the landscape during periods when fire has very limited benefits. Fire naturally burned when we are at a high risk suppression stance.

Should create a policy architecture that harmonizes fire management priorities and policies, especially those relating to safely restoring fire's natural role, across and within jurisdictions and planning level

Should identify barriers to ecological restoration and safely restoring fire's natural role across landscapes; it should propose changes to administrative policy and guidance accordingly.

Should address how Land and Resource Management Plans and Fire Management Plans can together better serve the goal of safely restoring fire's natural role.

Should address the relationship between Fire Management Plans and ecological restoration, and how those can be explicitly linked to better serve the goal of safely restoring fire's natural role.

Priority Values & Attributes

Should fire prevention e.g. vegetation restoration be rewarded as prevented (proactive vs. reactive)

How can this be funded and how segments would qualify?

How can we get highest return on funds expended in budget?

Determine baseline for a real rating system for communities at risk so funding priorities can be established.

Where do interests intersect? Where do they diverge?

What is most irreplaceable? I.e. critical habitat

What is the most prudent short term investment to achieve long term forest resiliency and fire risk reduction

What is the necessary level of investment in restoration to achieve landscape resiliency in 20 years?

Where is most money spent in fire suppression and why is it so expensive in these places?

Where are local communities, counties and state governments making the greatest investment in CWPP, local planning, zoning & ordinances to keep homes out of fire prone areas?

Where are the “irreplaceable habitats” that are most at risk and would be destroyed by uncharacteristic, unplanned wildfire? (e.g. old growth forests that are overgrown with fuel, Sonora desert that is not fire adapted & has invasive grasses that burn).

Is the public willing to do what is necessary to protect priority values?

Does the public/land management agencies understand the risk to certain land mgt designations – i.e. wilderness?

Cost of prevention & risk reduction vs. cost of suppression

Taxpayer cost vs. assumption of fire risk by forest homeowners or business/private landowners

How must workloads be prioritized and managed to adequately protect human life, communities, property, and natural and cultural resources

How to factor in safety of firefighters in each fire suppression strategy?

What is the value of the resources that will be lost and how can that lost value be minimized?

Policy should address cultural, biological, human ecosystem, etc values in a comprehensive approach- fire policy cannot be based on risk reduction objectives alone.

Human habitation, use, interface with ecosystems and linkages to smoke management are important values to account for in the strategy.

Applying (how to) the same policy on different jurisdictions & agency missions.

What are current conditions? What can we do about them?

What are the social considerations?

How can we greatly expand fire for resource Benefit?

Smoke management is a critical choke point in terms of beneficial fire use. How do we deal with people at high risk to exposure to smoke?

How do we identify large area of the landscape where fire can meet and maintain resource goals with acceptable risk? Must have the role of fire accepted as an essential management tool

Ecosystem dynamics: vegetation mix, wildlife issues. Watershed and riparian dynamics & the role of fire in health and functionality

Rating and Incorporating Risk

Recognize that the public expects zero risk (see airplane flights) and that the federal govt should (a) protect and (b) when not protected, made whole (as in National Flood Insurance Model). Same thinking may underlie fire management or wildfires.

How well do neighboring or related entities work together for the greater good? (reduce risk as a goal) How can we pull these folks together, working for a common goal?

Fuel type

Fire History

Values at risk (#, kind, population)

Community Involvement and buy-in

To date accomplishments

Community objectives

Remember the lower elevations and their relation to forests.

Fire is not an integral part of the landscape

Fire adapted communities – level of investment in the community to become fire adapted, coupled with physical risk of fire

Fire Response – risk to firefighters & people, smoke impacts, costs of response options, climatic conditions

Restoration- level of investment by partners to restore landscapes, level of collaboration & agreements on science to guide restoration.

Do we truly understand the consequence of different ranking-priorities

National priorities are always changing depending on politics – how do we ensure some consistency form year to year to provide opportunity for success?

Are permanent residents, visitors, and others present in the area than need to be evacuated or protected? How many? Are evacuation routes identified and adequate?

What consideration is/should be given to suppression costs compared to resource values?

Are there hazardous materials present and what risks do they present to firefighters and for increasing the spread rate?

What fuels are involved and what is their spread rate?

What are the key values for a particular landscape?

Where is the landscape condition in relation to natural range of variability?

Fuel loading & models

Environmental conditions

Social concerns and community economic viability

Climate Issues- is the future

Vegetation zone concerns – fire needs to be riparian zones - Wildlife values

Interruption of natural fire regimes has resulted in an unnatural forest structure that must be addressed prior to the ability to allow fire to assume its natural role in forest health and structure

What, beyond fuels and vegetation which we can modify with treatments, are the primary impediments to safely restoring fire's natural role at the landscape scale?

How can LRMPs and FMPs be designed to better serve the goal of maximizing fires natural role in fire adapted ecosystems?

Are there elements of incident management that can be pre-planned in FMPs or LRMPs to better serve the goal of maximizing fire's natural role?

Could administratively delineating Maximum Manageable Areas in LRMPs form a spatial context for linking restoration and fire management?

How can restoration treatments be designed to facilitate fire management goals and the safe operational management of natural fires?

How can we link restoration treatment designs to fire management plans in a way that is maximally efficient in safely restoring fire's natural role?

How might the issuance of guidance help link restoration treatment designs to fire management plans in a way that enables the safe operational management of planned and unplanned ignition?

How might the issuance of guidance for both planning and operations link and harmonize restoration treatment designs and fire management priorities?

What are the most critical biological values on the landscape, and how can they be impacted by fire management activities?

How can fire management plans facilitate the conservation and recovery of threatened and endangered species and their critical habitat?

What are mechanisms by which we can insure that fire policy is actually implemented by federal agencies?

Time Frame

5 years – technology is changing so fast and policy too
Should not be stagnant plan- clear and concise goals that are achievable

Maximum of 5 years- to coincide with Congressional requirements depending upon what they are trying to address. Update more often change requires it
Different elements of the fire strategy could encompass different timeframes depending upon what they are trying to achieve

5-10 Planning should be immediate all the way out to a 5 and then 10 year set of goals. 10 year plan taken in historic economic swings

10 years – within a person's time.. maybe long enough to get information for feedback
Envision a moving target.

10 year intervals with room for Adaptive adjustments when/where needed as we learn as we go.
Provide for adequate training, education, understanding, coordination and adaption of changes in fire policy.

10-20 years - As quickly as it can to get it done right
Need to start at both ends- Top down priorities and bottom up evaluation and implementation
Must define and assign accountability in this effort – 5 to 10 years for review and refinement

10 years short term
30 years long term

10 year goals and action plans that are derived from a 50 year vision
Scale of problem is such that we need 50 years of action to make a difference
10 year goals & action plans has worked for us before (e.g. 10 year comprehensive strategy) and transcends administrations.

10-15 years to coincide with agency land use planning with 5 year review

20 years- the strategy needs to be long term – as far as broad goals are with strategically defined steps to help achieve the goals

20 years – to accomplish widespread restoration. Resources need to double or triple to achieve resiliency. This is long term enough for us to plan and see results. Shorten time frames would be unrealistic infusion of additional resources.

50 year vision to encompass the long-term job of restoration before us.
10 year implementation plans to set forth clear goals, objectives, and deliverables in service of that vision;
5 year reviews to make changes based on trends identified across annual reporting;

Annual reporting to bolster accountability and track progress toward deliverables.

Land Unit Plans, State Risk Assessments, CWPPs, Land management regulations

Ideally the strategy should be top down rather than bottom up – with guidance and direction

Interagency operating plans (involving local govts)
ICC – WUI code adoption by local governments

Form regional or state wide panels that meet on a regular basis and have members set up a network for information distribution and collection

Involve the rural communities fuel management partnership (RCFMP) which is a local group in the greater Flagstaff area – which has formulate a very effective and economical forest thinning tactics

CWPPs reflect the cultural landscape important to people. The Strategy should honor the WUIs identified by the community. To denigrate CWPPs because of inconsistencies in CWP Plan preparation and to use this as an excuse not to accept these boundaries is disrespectful.

What incentives can we create for land use plans, compacts, CWPP, etc to manage growth & development in fire prone lands and to retrofit existing homes & communities to be safe from wild fire?

What type of plans would be consistent among all stakeholders- ex state assessment?
Should policy direct some consistency in terms of planning
Statewide Strategy – CWPPs
State Assessment – fire wise

Arizona statewide Forest Restoration strategy – a plan developed through a broad stakeholder group which focuses on forest ecological restoration to some multiple goals of jobs, environment, and fire management.

Who is responsible for developing and implementing land use plans, IG compacts, CWPPs, and FACs?

What opportunities for involvement are available for each?

What are the means for which involvement can best be achieved?

Why have (require) separate planning processes for the same piece of real estate? CWPPs, developed independently & in some cases without input from FS/BLM etc (where Fire Mgt plans exist_ informing the process.

Cohesive, coherent, coordinated public education efforts

For amenity economy communities, management needs to consider the entire ecosystem, not just the WUI

Plan for watershed and riparian degradation due to long term suppression

Based on land ownership patterns and proximity to communities, where on each unit can natural fires be allowed to burn in the future?

All things considered – most significant issue

How to figure out how to incorporate and incentivize the private sector – especially in the restoration economy. (By changing procurement policies, aligning restoration needs with dept of energy biomass utilization goals).

Public information & involvement- Defining everyone's responsibilities and where they fit in the big picture

A vital piece of the strategy is the local community. Most cannot afford to do any mitigation without federal support. Not implying that all funding should be federal, matching funds (SFA) needs to continue or local govt will cease to participate in mitigation.

How to work across the entire landscape across all jurisdictions.

Restoration so that over the long term fire performs its evolutionary function.

Don't create an inside the beltway rigidity about how fire should be managed. Variation in vegetation types, conditions and attributes at risk cannot be anticipated in all circumstances. Train the professionals sufficiently so they can manage fire. (and please don't over engineer the decision protocols)

Identify red zones – Make sure 10 year plan is in place to reduce risk where Ff costs high

Landscape level treatments

Economic opportunism that could be possible as part of the solution (biomass)

Fire needs to return to the landscape

Fire suppression costs more than anything else represent risk reduction and land use management.

Human safety, including fire fighters

Program costs vs. public land & resource values

Consideration of impacts of climate change on rangelands in western US

Consideration of the impacts on threatened and endangered species?

How to apply one strategy across jurisdictional variances & in an effective way to address the current & future values for a particular landscape

Ecosystems need to be ready for fire adaption

Base the strategy on best science

[That said- science, not politics has to fuel the cohesive strategy. Fire is a critical factor and must be applied on the landscape. But who are the scientists? Where are they in the process- how do they integrate into strategy process?]

Ensure that work that exists (CWPPs, Fire wise planning etc) retains its relevance. Must think of communities as integrated into the fire adapted landscape and fire as adapted as the surrounding wild land. Strategic and tactical priorities must be coordinated.

Identify the science that will get us to where fire adapted landscapes are priorities (fire sue benefits)

Safely reestablishing natural fire regimes—the natural location, timing, and duration of fire processes—across landscape scales, insofar as practicable.

Natural fire regimes correlate with climate; they allow forest changes to track climate change over time. Current and predicted future climate changes compound unpredictable shifts in environmental conditions, making it critical that restoration activities increase the adaptive capacity of ecosystems. By safely restoring natural fire regimes, fire-adapted ecosystems can incrementally adjust in response to climate-entrained fire effects; the safe reestablishment of landscape scale fire processes will, over time, create forest conditions that are more resilient, less prone to rapid, large-scale “type shifts,” dynamically entrained with ongoing climate cycles, and, overall, enable natural ecological responses—and changing natural variability—in the face of novel future climates.

Other Comments

Take this opportunity to create policy alignment – from the land use plans to appropriation dollars. Discard old pieces of existing policies that do not fit with (or are counter to) the Cohesive Strategy

Develop communications strategy & plan as a key part of the Cohesive Strategy – addressing internal/agencies, govt, stakeholders, property owners & public

Create a strategy, based on national goals and objectives, but develop regional implementation plans because priorities & issues vary so widely across the nation.

Don't lose sight of the dialogue- these forums have started. Don't let this be the end and continue with an open & transparent process.

Fire adapted landscapes are not exclusive of imbedded communities and fire can and does originate in communities and move into the wild lands. What do we want the future landscape to look like and what can we live with? The truth is that within the current paradigm we will not return the landscape to presettlement conditions. Evaluate what we have and what level of sustainability & dynamic change we can obtain and pass on to the future.

Looking at Rodeo-Chedeski from 8 years ago; it has already become dangerous again and no work is being done there. Landscape fire – to prevent it from becoming even more dangerous.

Quantify and define current plans and processes with risk assessments so that the resulting comprehensive plan does not circumvent all of the processes and work we've accomplished.